



# PUBLIC HEALTH BYTES

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Henrico Health Department's Newsletter

Working in partnership  
with the citizens of  
Henrico County to create  
the conditions for health.

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## Communicable Diseases

**Henrico Roundup: Enteric disease** - Henrico Health District has received an increase in reports of enteric disease as is typical during the summer months. The health department encourages providers to order stool tests for patients with clinically compatible illness. Contact us by phone (804) 501-4522 or fax (804) 501-4232 to report. See: [http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/Epidemiology/Disease\\_List.htm](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/Epidemiology/Disease_List.htm)

## Environmental Health

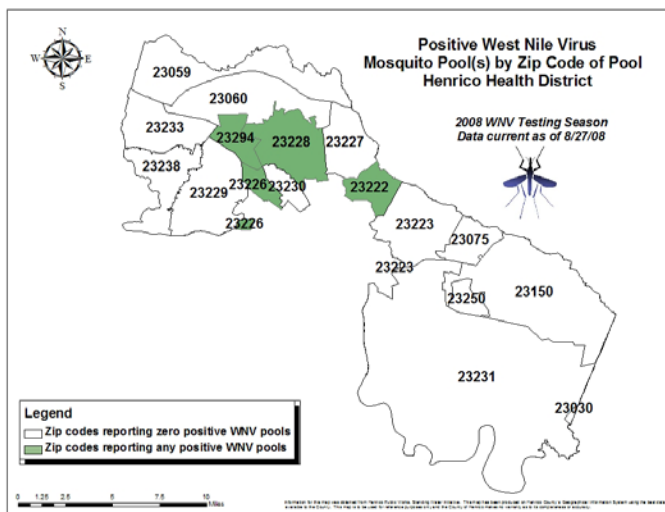
**Rabies Vaccine Status:** The rabies vaccine shortage woes continue. Due to higher than expected use of rabies vaccine and the unavailability of the IMOVAX<sup>®</sup> vaccine, Novartis, maker of RabAvert<sup>®</sup> rabies vaccine announced a concern about the near-term availability of the only currently available rabies vaccine. At this time, and until further notice, all health care providers must confer with public health officials before ordering RabAvert for rabies post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP). Henrico providers should contact us using our posted process at [www.publichealthbytes.org](http://www.publichealthbytes.org)

**Tobacco:** Resources to enhance clinician effectiveness in increasing smoking quit rates include 1) Discovery Health CME webinar at:

<http://discoveryhealthcme.discovery.com/smoking/smoking.html>

2) "Continuing Education Aimed at Smoking Elimination (CEASE)" initiative. See <http://cs2day.com/> 3) Although Henrico County Health Department has been identifying smoke free restaurants in the county for the past few years, the VDH restaurant inspection database now identifies such facilities. See <http://www.healthspace.ca/vdh>

**Arboviral Update - Henrico:** As of 8/27/08, Henrico County is reporting WNV positive mosquito pools in the following zip codes: 23222, 23226, 23228 and 23294. Also to date, note that there have been no human cases of neuroinvasive WNV disease reported in Virginia for the 2008 season.



## Pandemic Flu - ALERT PHASE WHO: 3; US: 0

**Pandemic/Avian Flu Update: Human Cases** – No new human H5N1 infections were confirmed since last report. The case fatality rate stands at 63.1%. **The Great Pandemic** - CDC created a 1918 storybook with accounts from survivors. See: <http://www.pandemicflu.gov/storybook/index.html>

## Emergency Preparedness

**Testing our plans: Pandemic flu** - A table-top exercise, involving multiple county agencies and local area hospitals, is planned for late October. This exercise will focus on the pandemic flu scenario that involves the evaluation and management of initial cases of the suspected disease in Henrico County. **Cities Readiness Initiative (CRI)** - Health districts have purchased pre-stocked trailers to allow for faster mobilization and set-up of our points of dispensing (POD's) as part of a regional plan for dispensing antibiotics community-wide in response to an anthrax attack. The **Richmond Times Dispatch** has agreed to print our CRI supplement, which includes dosing and directions for the antibiotics, and informs the public about anthrax.

## Prevention Updates

### United States Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF)

**Updates:** The USPSTF concludes that "the current evidence is insufficient to assess the balance of benefits and harms of prostate cancer screening in men younger than age 75 years." **Grade: I statement.** The USPSTF recommends "against screening for prostate cancer in men age 75 years or older." **Grade: D recommendation.** USPSTF has also issued videos to guide clinicians on how to use "I" statement recommendations in the clinical setting. See <http://www.ahrq.gov/clinic/ivideos.htm>

### Preventing pharmaceutical contamination of drinking water:

In June 2008, the FDA issued a consumer update about proper medication disposal as a result of the identification of pharmaceuticals in both surface and drinking waters. Remind patients that drugs should not be automatically flushed down the toilet or poured down a sink or drain unless this is specified as the disposal method. See [http://www.fda.gov/consumer/updates/drug\\_disposal062308.html](http://www.fda.gov/consumer/updates/drug_disposal062308.html) for more information.

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